

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 5 remain pending in the present application. Claims 6-14 have been cancelled. Claim 1 has been amended. Basis for the amendments can be found throughout the specification, drawings and claims as originally filed.

The undersigned attorney would like to thank Examiner Nguyen for the courtesies extended to him during the personal interview on August 10, 2005. At the interview, above Claim 1 was discussed. At the interview, the undersigned attorney pointed out the differences between the method of Claim 1 and that of the prior art. The Examiner conceded that amended Claim 1 appeared to overcome the art of record. The Examiner indicated that she would update the search and consider the amendment when presented.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ireland et al (U.S. Patent No. 4,647,491) in view of Smith (U.S. Patent No. 2,803,418). As mentioned at the interview, Claim 1 provides a retainer which includes a U-shaped hook portion which extends at an angle towards its adjacent stem portion. The hook portion engages over the upper edge portion of a pot and resiliently grasp the rim portion to tightly fasten it together and extend the rod downward from the pot closely adjacent to the outside of the pot wall. As was pointed out at the interview, the Ireland et al. and Smith combination fail to disclose or suggest such a U-shape hook for resiliently grasping the pot. The Ireland et al. reference illustrated a hook which has its hook portion parallel to the stem. The Smith reference illustrates a

hook which angles away from the stem. This is directly opposite to Applicant's claimed invention.

Accordingly, Applicant believes Claim 1 to be patentably distinct over the art cited by the Examiner. Likewise, Claims 2-5 which depend from Claim 1 are patentably distinct over the art cited by the Examiner.

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to pass the case to issue at her earliest possible convenience. should the Examiner have any questions regarding the present application, she should not hesitate to contact the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,


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